ANNUAL ADMINISTRATION REPORT OF THE SIND FOREST DEPARTMENT, FOR THE YEAR 1886-87.

Introduction.

The area of the Sind Forests at the end of the year under report was 699 square miles and 409 acres, a gain of 26 square miles and 203 acres over the area as it stood on 1st April 1886. Of this 24 square miles and 101 acres was added by newly demarcated Reserves, and the balance is the net gain by changes of the river.

But the land lost by erosion was, much of it, valuable forest, whereas the land gained is mere sand-banks, at present and its value depends on its further development.

2. Forest demarcation has been completed and the office of the Forest Settlement Officer is to be broken up.

3. Much damage was done by forest fires caused by cattle-breeders setting fire to the reed jungle and grass in Upper Sind with a view to checking the ravages of cattle-disease which was very prevalent in the district, otherwise the protection of the forest has been good, and the relations of the people with the subordinates of the Department satisfactory. Two known thieves of forest material—men who had been previously convicted of similar offences, were caught in possession of a large quantity of timber evidently stolen from the Upper Sind Forests. They were convicted by the City Magistrate and sentenced to Rs. 400 and Rs. 450 fine respectively, and both to imprisonment for 12 months, but on appeal to the Sessions Judge of Shikarpur they were let off with a fine of Rs. 50.

4. The Revenue both gross and net is the largest ever shown in this Circle and gives a net result of six annas per acre of land under Forest management.

5. The export of wood to Bombay and Katiawar coast is fairly satisfactory and the export of charcoal to Aden and the Persian Gulf on the increase.

6. Mr. Tuljaram was appointed Sub-Assistant Conservator of Forests on the 24th of August 1886. No other changes in the Forest Staff have to be recorded.

CHAPTER I.

Area and Boundaries.

7. The following statement shows the area of the Sind Forests as it stood on 31st March 1886, also the additions thereto and the exclusions therefrom :—

Area as it stood on 31st March 1886.		Area added during the year or gained by action of the river.		Area excluded during the year or lost by action of the river.		Area as it stood on 31st March 1887.	
Sqr. Miles.	Acres.	Sqr. Miles.	Acres.	Sqr. Miles.	Acres.	Sqr. Miles.	Acres.
673	206	34	553	8	350	699	409

A very extensive area has been lost by the action of the river in Upper Sind. The Shahu and Jamshero forests have been so much eaten into by the river that the former has nearly disappeared and only a few hundred acres of the latter are left. The river in this part of the Province winds very much and has several old beds; both the threatened forests will probably disappear unless a decided change takes place in the set of the river.

In Central Sind the loss by erosion has not been serious but in Lower Sind 1,350 acres have been lost, 830 of which were good Babul Forest.

The total area lost by erosion is 5,470 acres, the fresh alluvial land thrown up amounts to 6,850 acres. Rs. 1,531 were spent in keeping eroding banks clear of timber. Rs. 3,940 were realized by the sale of material so cut and material to the value of Rs. 360 remained on hand at the end of the year.

8. A "Kacha" or alluvial accretion to the Lalia Forest which was thrown up in 1877 was worked for the first time this season for Railway fuel (Tamarisk). The quantity taken out was not very large but there is abundant material on the Kacha and the yield will be larger yearly. It is satisfactory to know that land lost by erosion can be replaced by workable forest in ten years' time. The "Kachas" moreover that are, as a rule, thrown up on one frontage where erosion takes place on another are of immense value as grazing-grounds, and for the raising of fodder-crops.

9. The usual statement giving the details of land selected for forest purposes during the last and previous years, and that finally constituted Reserved Forests is given below :—

Land selected for Forest purposes and notified under Section 4.				Land finally settled and constituted Reserved Forests during the year under report.		
Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in acres.	Year in which originally notified.	Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in Acres.
Shikarpur	Shikarpur.	49,159·0	1880	Bagban.	Dadu.	1,946·35
Pir Nazir	Do.	18,549·0	1882	Phaka.	Do.	2,206·30
Kaper Shah				Pipri.	Do.	925·20
Mohro Mari				Gidarji.	Manjhand.	854·35
Amrote	Labdaria.	10,844·0	1882	Raharki.	Ubauro.	1,653·30
Muso	Do.	4,311·0		Reti.	Do.	2,287·35
Ali Ganj	Tatta.	431·20	1884	Rangu.	Do.	971·22
Hilaya		849·18		Naruli.	Do.	1,376·14
Shah Lanko		312·10		Bhani	Sehwan.	1,138·3
Tatta		12,388·30		Kolubori.	Do.	747·25
Gharko		933·23		Khathar.	Hyderabad.	39·30
Chachh		3,361·27		Raiswah.	Shikarpur.	904·20
Ghangherko	Tigir and Labdaria.	6,210·30	1884	Messa.	Kotri.	308·0
Budo-dero		1,617·15				15,461·19
Soi		5,851·0				
Gajidero		5,661·15				

Land selected for Forest purposes and notified under Section 4.				Land finally settled and constituted Reserved Forests during the year under report.		
Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in acres.	Year in which originally notified.	Name of Forest.	Taluka.	Area in Acres.
Rohri	Rohri.	15,393.3	1885			
Ghangherko	Tigir.	2·0	1885			
Lakhi	Sukkur.	3,592·15	1885			
Ghari Halim	Sukkur.	2,081·20	1885			
Gharichand	Jacobabad.	19·35	1885			
Dilmurad	Thul.	48·9	1885			
Bangal Kalochi	Mirpur.	89·0	1885			
Mirpur	Mirpur.	8,566·24	1885			
Ghotki	Ghotki.	31,661·24	1885			
Kadrapur	Sukkur.	78·30	1885			
Jamshero	Ghotki.	57·20	1886			
Ghari Yasin	Naushahro Abro.	26,891·13	1886			
Mahomedpur	Jacobabad.	2,577·34	1886			
Hazaro	Jacobabad.	3,421·21	1886			
Khairwah	Jacobabad.	56·30	1886			
Gokalpur	Jacobabad.	64·30	1886			
Mirpur	Thul.	2,309·39	1886			
Mehrabpur	Thul.	4,817·37	1886			
Bakhtawarpur	Thul.	6,059·38	1886			
Jagan	Thul.	2,316·15	1886			
Tarai	Naushahro Abro.	2,349·5	1887			
Chango Rohuja	Naushahro Abro.	1,749·35	1887			
Choi	Naushahro Abro.	3,132·20	1887			
Adamji	Naushahro Abro.	4,352·25	1887			
Phohyari	Naushahro Abro.	473·4	1887			
Masti Khan	Naushahro Abro.	225·0	1887			
Kacho Alibhar	Sujawal.	3,000·0	1887			
Do. Surjani	Sujawal.	3,410·0	1887			
Do. Keti Saidino	Sujawal.	2,500·0	1887			
Naruli	Ubauro.	5·3	1887			
	Total...	2,51,784·37				

10. The Forest demarcation in Sind has been practically completed and the Forest Settlement Officer's Establishment will be broken up during the hot weather.

11. The total expenditure including the salaries of the Office Establishment of the Forest Settlement and Demarcation Officer in Sind incurred during the year under report in the creation and constitution of forests amounted to Rs. 2,562-9-2.

12. The demarcation of forests in the Kashmor Taluka has been postponed, but by agreement between the Deputy Commissioner, Upper Sind Frontier, and the Conservator, with the sanction of the Commissioner in Sind, the extensive jungles in the taluka are left under the protection of the Forest Department till such time as it will be advisable to undertake regular demarcation; perhaps after the introduction of the Revenue Survey Settlement.

CHAPTER II.

SURVEYS, WORKING PLANS AND ANNUAL PLANS OF OPERATIONS.

13. The survey of the forests on a scale of four inches to the mile has been continued. The progress made has not been as great as it might have been, owing to the work of the only Surveyor procurable being broken into by the necessity for sending him up to the Kashmor Taluka to make surveys of two tracts of land that it was intended to take up for Forest purposes.

The surveys of Forests prosecuted are as under :—

Phatah.....	258	acres.
Khadi	4,500	„
Laikpur	7,406	„
Total...	12,164	„

14. The plan of working out the compartments for fuel in succession and closing them for reproduction, has been adhered to in respect of the forests generally, but in the Laikpur forest, a working plan the details of which are given below, has been introduced tentatively.

The Laikpur Forest is one some distance from the river and having a very precarious water-supply, produces chiefly Kandi but is capable of yielding much material for Railway fuel. Its distance from the river, however, makes it expensive to work. To get the wood cut and delivered at paying rates and at the same time to get water on the land for the general benefit of the forest the following arrangement has been made with a Zamindar. He undertakes to clear the compartments in succession of all the Kandi on them and deliver the wood resulting from the fellings at Kotri at a fixed rate. He is to be permitted to cultivate the land cleared for two seasons. He makes his own arrangements for water and pays the usual land assessment. At the end of the second year he is to fence in one compartment and receive another to clear and cultivate, and the same the following year, so that every year one compartment will be cleared, and another that has been watered for two seasons, closed for reproduction. The agreement to cease if the Zamindar does not abide strictly by it and work in the interests of the Department.